

**Purpose** Consisting of 30 items, the PSQ was developed as an instrument for assessing the stressful life events and circumstances that tend to trigger or exacerbate disease symptoms. With stress bearing significantly on the quality and consistency of the sleep cycle [1], the PSQ is a potentially valuable tool for evaluating the underlying causes of sleep disturbances. The scale is specifically recommended for clinical settings, though it has been employed in research studies as well.

**Population for Testing** The PSQ has been validated with a population of in-patients, out-patients, students, and health care workers with a mean age of  $31.8 \pm 13.9$ .

**Administration** The scale is a self-report, pencil-and-paper measure requiring between 10 and 15 min for completion.

**Reliability and Validity** Developers Levenstein and colleagues [2] conducted a psychometric evaluation of the scale and found an internal consistency ranging from .90 to .92 and a test-retest reliability of .82. Results of the PSQ correlated

highly with trait anxiety and with scores on Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale.

**Obtaining a Copy** A copy can be found in the original article published by developers [2].

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**Scoring** In order to complete the PSQ, respondents receive one of two sets of scoring instructions: the general questionnaire queries stressful feelings and experiences over the course of the previous year or two, while the recent questionnaire concerns stress during the last month. Respondents indicate on a scale from 1 ("almost never") to 4 ("usually") how frequently they experience certain stress-related feelings. Higher scores indicate greater levels of stress. A total score is found by tallying each item (questions 1, 7, 10, 13, 17, 21, 25, and 29 are positive and are scored according to the directions accompanying the scale). A PSQ index can be found by subtracting 30 from the raw score and dividing the result by 90, yielding a score between 0 and 1.

### The Perceived Stress Questionnaire

#### Instructions for the General questionnaire

For each sentence, circle the number that describes how often it applies to you in general, *during the last year or two*. Work quickly, without bothering to check your answers, and be careful to describe your life *in the long run*.

	Almost	Sometimes	Often	Usually
1. You feel rested	1	2	3	4
2. You feel that too many demands are being made on you	1	2	3	4
3. You are irritable or grouchy	1	2	3	4
4. You have too many things to do	1	2	3	4
5. You feel lonely or isolated	1	2	3	4
6. You find yourself in situations of conflict	1	2	3	4
7. You feel you're doing things you really like	1	2	3	4
8. You feel tired	1	2	3	4
9. You fear you may not manage to attain your goals	1	2	3	4
10. You feel calm	1	2	3	4
11. You have too many decisions to make	1	2	3	4
12. You feel frustrated	1	2	3	4
13. You are full of energy	1	2	3	4
14. You feel tense	1	2	3	4
15. Your problems seem to be piling up	1	2	3	4
16. You feel you're in a hurry	1	2	3	4
17. You feel safe and protected	1	2	3	4
18. You have many worries	1	2	3	4
19. You are under pressure from other people	1	2	3	4
20. You feel discouraged	1	2	3	4
21. You enjoy yourself	1	2	3	4
22. You are afraid for the future	1	2	3	4
23. You feel you're doing things because you have to not because you want to	1	2	3	4
24. You feel criticized or judged	1	2	3	4
25. You are lighthearted	1	2	3	4
26. You feel mentally exhausted	1	2	3	4
27. You have trouble relaxing	1	2	3	4
28. You feel loaded down with responsibility	1	2	3	4
29. You have enough time for yourself	1	2	3	4
30. You feel under pressure from deadlines	1	2	3	4

#### Instructions for the Recent questionnaire

For each sentence, circle the number that describes how often it applied to you *during the last month*. Work quickly, without bothering to check your answers, and be careful to consider only *the last month*.  
 Score 5-circled number for items 1, 7, 10, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29  
 Score circled number for all other items  
 PSQ Index = (raw score-30)/90.

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Note: The 8 items listed above are inverted, i.e., 4=1, 3=2, 2=3, and 1=4.

## References

1. Van Reeth, O., Weibel, L., Spiegel, K., Leproult, R., Dugovic, C., & Maccari, S. (2000). Interactions between stress and sleep: from basic research to clinical situations. *Sleep Medicine Reviews*, 4(2), 201–219.
2. Levenstein, S., Prantera, C., Varvo, V., Scribano, M. L., Berto, E., Luzi, C., & Andreoli, A. (1993). Development of the perceived stress questionnaire: a new tool for psychosomatic research. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 37(1), 19–32.

## Representative Studies Using Scale

1. Levenstein, S., Prantera, C., Varvo, V., Scribano, M. L., Andreoli, A., Luzi, C., Arcà, M., Berto, E., Milite, G., & Marcheggiano, A. (2000). Stress and exacerbation in ulcerative colitis: a prospective study of patients enrolled in remission. *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, 95, 1213–1220.
- Öhman, L., Bergdahl, J., Nyberg, L., & Nilsson, L. G. (2007). Longitudinal analysis of the relation between moderate long-term stress and health. *Stress and Health*, 23(2), 131–138.